India

FOR THE

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NOTES AND NEWS.

In view of the proposal to bring Indian troops to South Africa in the event of the outbreak of war with the Transvaal, it may be well to set forth Section 55 of 21 and 22 Vict., c. 106:

Except for preventing or repelling actual invasion of Her Majesty's Indian possessions, or under other sudden and urgent necessity, the revenues of India shall not, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operation carried on beyond the external frontiers of such possessions by her Majesty's forces charged upon such revenues.

The Section occurs under the sub-heading of "Revenues," and its financial bearing is sufficiently obvious. Very probably there would be no difficulty about paying the whole of the expenses of any Indian troops temporarily serving in South Africa out of the Imperial exchequer, it being scarcely possible, one would imagine, to argue that India is in any way interested, or—to use the expression of Lord Cross in 1887—that the duties of such troops are "directly attributable to the requirements of the Government of India." But the Section really bears a larger significance, as explained in Parliament by the Duke of Devonshire and Mr. John Morley.

In 1882 the Government determined to employ Indian troops on service in Egypt, and Lord Hartington (now Duke of Devonshire) proposed a resolution (July 31) giving the consent of the House to the charging of some undefined portion of the expenses upon the revenues of India, and dealt frankly with the true significance of this Section 55. He said:—

The purpose with which the resolution is moved is not mainly, nor yet all, of a financial character, but is rather of a political and a constitutional character. The necessity of moving this resolution is defined in 55th Section of the Act for the Government of India. That Section has been the subject from time to time of a good deal of controversy. But for this section it would be possible—I do not say it would be probable, but it was conceivable—that the Government might carry on military operations through the agency of the Government of India, by means of the troops maintained on the Indian establishment and charged on the Indian revenues, without the consent of Parliament at all. I do not say that such a case is probable, but it is not only to prevent such a contingency that the statute was framed. It also reserves to Parliament the power of deciding on the question whether, in case of an operation or a policy which has been essentially and in principle decided on by Parliament, whether such a policy may be carried out by the agency of India troops, or only by the agency of troops on the British establishment.

The power thus reserved is, in fact, an extremely important power, and it ought to be exercised with scrupulous care in every case where it is not rendered practically impossible by the suddenness of the emergency—an exception very unlikely to arise.

The Section came again into discussion in the debate on the Suakin Contingent on July 6, 1896. Mr. John Morley moved an amendment that "it is inexpedient that any portion of the charges of the Indian force that is being despatched to Africa in aid of Egyptian troops, whether ordinary charges or extraordinary, should be imposed upon the revenues of India," and based it expressly upon Section 55. In the course of his speech he referred to "the weighty language" of the Duke of Devonshire, as cited above. Again, he said:—

I was glad to hear the noble lord admit—it was to me one of the most important parts of his speech—that we cannot be too vigilant, too jealously careful, at this moment especially, in regard to examining the conditions under which Indian troops may be employed; because, as the noble lord very well said, we are in an era of what I may call adventures in South Africa, when the temptation to resort to the employment of Indian troops will be immense.

The words were prophetic. Besides, Mr. Morley effectively cited the views of Lord Salisbury, when Lord Cranborne, in 1867. Supporting Mr. Fawcett's contention that the pay of Indian troops employed in Abyssinia should not be charged on India, Lord Cranborne pointedly emphasized a consideration that must not be lost sight of to-day:—

If this garrison which we keep in India is, as all Indian authorities assure us, necessary for maintaining that country in security and peace, that garrison ought not to be rashly diminished. If, on the other hand, it is too large, and India can for any length of time conveniently spare these troops, then the Indian population ought not to be so unnecessarily taxed.

Lord Salisbury might usefully whisper these two sentences into the ears of Mr. Chamberlain and Lord George Hamilton.

The *Spectator* in dealing with the Indian debate rests its case as usual on the over-population of the country. It speaks of the frightful increase, but also as usual it gives no figures except in one misquotation from Lord George Hamilton. Like him it will not condescend to enquire the ratio of increase, which perhaps was prudent as any attempt to do so would have shown the weakness of its case. ·94 per cent per annum is not an astounding addition. It is equalled in Japan. It is exceeded in many parts of Europe and in several of the native states. Even as to the causes of the increase, the devotees of the over-population theory are not agreed, Lord George Hamilton ascribing it to the *Pax Britannica* alone, whereas the *Spectator* thinks there are many causes, the greater household care of children being among the number. It concludes by remarking: "If Burma, Assam and the Central Provinces were easily accessible they could provide for thirty million more agriculturists."

As we have just said, the *Spectator* once condescends to figures, but only to misquote. Sir Robert Giffen, correctly quoted by Lord George Hamilton, estimated that "since 1871 the population of British India had increased seventy millions, and that the annexations since that period form but a small part of this increase." But the *Spectator* boldly omits all the latter portion of the sentence, and not content with the view that the annexations (including nearly three millions in Upper Burma alone) are but a small part of the increase, ignores them altogether, and leaves its readers under the impression that the seventy millions may be taken without deduction. But this is not all. The *Spectator* puts the matter in the baldest way and prints the seventy millions in italics. Here is the whole sentence:—

Owing, Lord George Hamilton thinks, to the *Pax Britannica*, but, as we think, to many causes, one of them being a marked increase in the household care of children, the population of British India has since 1871 increased by *seventy millions*, nearly twice the whole population of France.

Who would think from this that the "seventy millions" was only an estimate; that no census has been taken since 1891, and that the census of 1871, with which the calculation begins, was flagrantly and admittedly inaccurate, thus making the increase between that and the more accurate, though still far from perfect, census of 1881, much greater than it should be? The over-populationists are right in keeping clear of figures.

It has been held as a sufficient answer to all criticisms of the new scheme of municipal reform for Calcutta that the new constitution would be the same as that of Bombay; for had not the critics of the old scheme, put forward by the Bengal Government, pointed out that it was inferior to the civic constitution of the latter city? The *Champion*, however, has taken the trouble to compare the two, and has no difficulty in showing that they are not really the same. Under Lord Curzon's scheme for Calcutta, 25

members of the Corporation are to be elected by the ratepayers, 15 nominated by the Government, and 10 chosen by bodies under European control. In Bombay, out of 72 members, 36 are elected by the ratepayers, the same proportion as in Calcutta under the new plan; but of the remaining 36 no fewer than 16 are to be elected by the Bench of Justices, leaving 20 nominated by Government or chosen by bodies of the kind which are to choose representatives in Calcutta. In other words, instead of 25 representatives of the European community and the Government out of 50, there are in Bombay 20 out of 72, two-sevenths as against one-half in the Calcutta scheme. The *Champion* describes the Bench of Justices as "a very intelligent and enlightened mixed body of the entire community," and it adds, "that Bench is considered the most enlightened electorate," so that no fewer than 52 of the 72 members may be considered as representative of the whole community.

It is interesting to compare this with the remarks of the *Friend of India* on Lord Curzon's proposals. That Anglo-Indian paper, while of opinion that some change was necessary, found itself unable to support the original plan of the Bengal Government, and the new plan, though it believes it an improvement on the old, is still far from satisfying it. It specially objects to the elected members being only one-half of the Corporation, and thus probably only being able to elect four out of the eight members of the executive chosen by the Corporation, or allowing for the four nominated members, one-third of the whole executive. It proposes to add some eight members to the Corporation, each representing a group of wards, and chosen by an electorate with a high qualification. This, it will be observed, approximates more nearly to the Bombay system than does the Government Bill. But perhaps the most pertinent moral to be drawn from these differences and alternatives is the advantage of giving the whole question further consideration and postponing the final decision.

The *Pioneer*, discussing the question "Is British Rule Popular?" while admitting that it can scarcely be called so, thinks the same may be said of most Governments in the present age. It goes on:—

> Apart from the fact that discontent is now allowed to speak, for the first time, under British rule—and that expression is surely the first step and only preliminary to the redress of grievances—it is the characteristic of modern political writings to aim less at the eulogy of what is good than at the exposition of what is capable of improvement.

It is, indeed, satisfactory to find the leading Anglo-Indian organ describing the free expression of discontent as necessary for the redress of grievances and therefore justifiable; but the rulers of India are, it is to be feared, still a long way behind this.

The plague continues to increase in Poona. It is all the more fortunate that Dr. Reade, the chief plague authority, is popular and conciliatory. As the *Mahratta* points out, as much depends on the way regulations are carried out as on the regulations themselves. Recently a deputation waited on Dr. Reade and discussed certain grievances with him for two hours and a-half. This may seem rather hard on the doctor, but he may be sure that any time spent in increasing the public confidence in his administration is not time wasted. And according to the *Mahratta* even under his sympathetic rule abuses exist. It says that out of 150 patients admitted into a single hospital some forty were not really suffering from plague. To say nothing of the resulting segregation of the patient's family, for a man who is not suffering from plague to be detained in a plague hospital even for a short time would try the nerves of the strongest. Dr. Reade has now notified that in future patients will be removed only when unmistakable symptoms of plague are apparent.

According to the *Mahratta's* correspondent, the meeting at Belgaum, over which Mr. Capell, Revenue Commissioner of the Division, presided, showed that the same confidence between the authorities and the people did not reign there as at Poona. The Commissioner pointed out, sensibly enough, that in the rainy season evacuation was impossible, and he therefore recommended inoculation. In the discussion that followed, the first speaker opposed the practice, pointing out the differences of medical opinion thereon, and others took the same view. This brought up General Hart, who was indignant that Europeans should be asked to try inoculation though none had died of plague (?) It is asserted that the gallant officer went on to say that "we English" are a practical people and not mere talkers like natives. One Indian was induced to speak in favour of inoculation, but took the opportunity of stating certain popular grievances under plague administration. In his reply Mr. Capell, a worthy pupil of Lord George Hamilton, promised to attend to the suggestions of outsiders who were in favour of their arrangements, but to pay no heed to others.

It is one of the deplorable results of a loss of confidence in the impartiality of the Courts that men take the law into their own hands. The Pollarbund case has had a most unfortunate sequel. Mr. Falckytter, who is out on bail charged with causing a coolie's death, has himself been attacked by coolies and injured in the arm. The men have been committed for trial and refused bail, though the offence is bailable. Their own account is that Mr. Falckytter was always assaulting them, and tried to thrust one, Kartic, into the fire. Kartic showed a wound in his leg; but Mr. Falckytter affirmed that he only reprimanded him. We take the above particulars from the *Amrita Bazar Patrika.*

A European employed in the railway workshops of Lahore put his horse to graze near his bungalow, but the gardener, Muhammad Bakhsh, in charge of the ground, remonstrated as he feared his plants might be injured. As a result he was shot by the owner of the horse, more than a dozen pellets being taken out of his back at the hospital. The case came before the District Magistrate, but was eventually compromised by the payment of Rs. 60. The *Tribune*, from which we take the above, asks: "Have you ever heard of a man in his senses at once shooting a fellow-creature on such slight provocation in any other country, where a civilised form of government exists, as in India?"

Mr. Theodore Morison and the *Pioneer* agree in proclaiming the great, if not growing, hostility of Hindu and Moslem. The *Tribune* traverses this. It says "taken generally the relations between Hindus and Mussulmans from one end of the country to the other are as friendly as can be desired." It goes on to point out that they were so in the days of Moslem rule and during the Sikh reign in the Punjab, when the Mahometans had their share in the highest offices. In the Native States men of both creeds rise to the highest positions, and at this very time "the Mahometan State of Junagarh is practically governed by Brahmans." Our contemporary asserts that the appointment of Hindu and Moslem judges has been "hailed with delight" by both communities. If in any quarters this good feeling has shown signs of abatement, it is to be found among postulants for office, and is chiefly due to the attempts of the Government to play the two bodies off against one another, and especially to persuade the Moslems that their interest lies in separating themselves from their Hindu fellow-countrymen. The *Tribune* is inclined to agree with the *Pioneer* that Aligarh College has had its share in this malign work.

At a time when so many instances of the contempt of Europeans for Indians have come before the public, the *Tribune* does well to remind us that the same feeling in all probability played some part in kindling the Mutiny. One very strong case in point it rescues from a book written by two English girls who passed some months at Meerut in the year before the outbreak. Speaking of their brother who was collector of the District, they say "Keith had a most absurd horror of a Native's coming near him . . . he would much sooner be touched by a toad than by one of their clammy hands." The collector himself thus describes the miseries he had to endure:—"Fancy sitting all day in a hot kutchery, crowded to suffocation with reeking Natives." And this man bore almost absolute rule over a great district and had to administer "justice" to those whom he thus despised. If there were many "Keiths" about in those days, they must have been a potent source of disaffection. Unfortunately such evidence as we have seems to show that the relations between ruled and rulers have not improved.

Though the Shanar-Ma[...] [...]iculty in Tinnevelly has quieted down, the fires are [...]ly smouldering. Mr. Hammick, the Special Commissioner in the Madura and Tinnevelly Districts, proposes in his report the establishment of a punitive force of 300 police in certain talugs, in addition to the ordinary police. The cost he estimates at Rs. 50,000 a year, plus a sum of Rs. 70,000 for housing the force in "temporary" buildings. Apart from the repulsive infliction of the expense upon the law-abiding portion of the community, there is the objection that the budmashes are just the men that will escape the penalty, being for the most part paupers. No period to the occupation of the talugs by the punitive force can be foreseen. Mr. Hammick says:—

> The outbreak was violent and rapid beyond the expectations of anybody, and looking to the continued causes of unrest that exist—the open sore of the Kanuthi temple dispute, the defeat of the Maravars at Sivakosi, the large turbulent population of Nanguneri, the fact that very little reliance can be placed on the village officers and village servants throughout the District, and that so many of the locally recruited police have failed to do their duty—it will be a work of great difficulty to maintain peace and order in Tinnevelly for many years to come.

The temple case, we notice, has been decided against the Shanars in a very elaborate judgment by Mr. T. Varada Row in the Subordinate Court at Madura East. But while the police may require this temporary reinforcement, it is plain, as we have already urged, that the Civil power must intervene with some efforts of remedial accommodation between the warring parties.

What has come over Northern Hindustan? *Power and Guardian* (July 16) gives woeful illustrations of its assertion that "offences against women have all of a sudden come to assume serious proportions." It says:—

> Some of the districts of Bengal have earned an unenviable notoriety through the outrageous conduct of some of the inhabitants. Mymensing and the 24 Pergannahs have come to have a bad odour about them for the numerical largeness of cases of rape, abduction, and outrage upon female modesty. But other districts are following their examples. Bankura, Hugli, Jalpaiguri have also begun to furnish cases of rape of the most atrocious nature. But the infection is not confined to Bengal. It has travelled far beyond the limits of this Province.

We refrain from citing particular cases. Our contemporary calls upon Government to act with promptitude and effect. "The existing criminal organisation," it says, "has apparently failed to infuse a wholesome fear in the breasts of budmashes." One specific point is worth noting with emphasis:—

> These cases, it should be clearly borne in mind, are cases eminently fitted to be tried by the jury. We therefore grow impatient when, instead of sending them up to the Sessions Judge, as should invariably be done, the Deputy Magistrates take upon themselves the delicate task of trying them. The procedure very often interferes with the proper administration of justice.

Power and Guardian illustrates its criticism by an example that bears an ugly resemblance to the Rangoon case, for "the poor girl was ravished successively by about a dozen people, and subjected to all sorts of oppression."

Last week we announced the appointment of Mr. Arnold White, who has filled the office of Advocate-General at Madras for a few months past, to be Chief Justice of Madras. No doubt he went out with a tolerably sure understanding that this promotion would duly come. We ask Lord George Hamilton to make public Mr. White's qualifications for the post. We know Mr. Justice Subramania Iyer's disqualification: he is not "a barrister," and therefore is ineligible under some handy statute. If he had been a barrister some other disqualification would have been discovered. But everybody acknowledges that he is an accomplished lawyer and a most capable judge; and we venture to prophesy that Chief Justice White will have served a large slice of his pension period before anybody will say the like for him. We are not aware that Mr. White ever had anything that would be called "a practice" in the Temple. He devilled a bit for another man, and his chief legal experience was in drafting Parliamentary documents for some Government office. The only effective legal experience he can boast has been gained in the few months of his Advocate-Generalship. In that office, we believe, he has acquitted himself very well. But the Chief Justiceship is another thing; and at this moment especially Madras requires a strong Chief Justice to retrieve its legal reputation. Will Lord George Hamilton tell the country that Mr. White was the best man he could lay his hands on? Possibly; he has quite enough courage for that. We sympathise with Mr. Justice Shephard, who has been elbowed out of a promotion that all Madras regarded him as fully entitled to expect. The appointment is a disgraceful exercise of official patronage, and we trust that Lord George Hamilton will be called upon to explain it on the floor of the House.

We are very glad to welcome the arrival of the "Report of the Fourteenth Indian National Congress held at Madras on December 29, 30 and 31, 1898 (Madras: printed by G. A. Natesan and Co.)." It is not clear to us why it has been delayed so many months, but after all it has appeared very much more expeditiously than recent Reports have done. We hope that it will come into the hands of all Members of Parliament and of active politicians outside Parliament, and particularly that its contents will be diligently studied by all who write or speak on Indian affairs, whether favourably or adversely to the Congress. The discussion will be found to maintain a high level throughout, and the tone of the speakers may challenge the criticism of those who never tire of casting stones at the Congress-wallahs. We venture to say that there is vastly more true statesmanship in this volume of three days' conference than in all the official speeches at Calcutta and Simla and Westminster during the same year—or any half-dozen years. Here are the *ipsissima verba* of the spokesmen for Indian reforms, and we hope that the English Press at all events will judge them by what they say themselves, and no longer by what their detractors say they say.

The Report of the Dazanand Anglo-Vedic College at Lahore for the past two years shows continuous progress which is very gratifying. We cannot but regret to observe that the Arya Samajes are apt to break out into heated controversy and to split up into sections; yet the fact seems to indicate interest and vitality, and the College Society appears to have taken judicious steps to obviate any harm that might thence arise to the institution. It speaks strongly for the College that it not merely exists but actually thrives under a Managing Committee of 58 members—a larger body than Lord Curzon thinks safe for the municipal administration of Calcutta, and nearly the half of them are pleaders! The various school departments have also exhibited a steady improvement. In the College special attention is given to Classical Sanskrit and the Vedic Philosophy, and the subordinate studies are worked up from the very lowest department of the School. We are glad to see that increasing regard is paid to the claims of physical exercise.

An Anglo-Indian correspondent writes:—Due notice was taken in your columns last week of that amazing (first) lecture by Sir Alfred Lyall at Oxford to the Extension students a fortnight ago. Those who had come to regard the University Extension movement as working in a sort of outer Grove of Academe where no political cries, or speculative expansion theories, can intrude, must have been somewhat disconcerted by Sir Alfred Lyall's spread-eagle prophesying as to what will happen between "the chief European Powers in Asia." But what could be meant by the statement that "there is no Native State that could oppose England"—in regions where Indians can scarcely live? This reminds one of a somewhat similar geographical solecism by Field-Marshal Lord Roberts when, in presiding at the Society of Arts at a lecture on Kafiristan, he alluded to it as "this part of India." This sort of random remarks may have an aspect of "extension" about them; but they ill accord with the calm temper of university teaching or scientific study. Sir William Hunter is not given to play the part of an ironic humourist; but what could he mean when he spoke of Sir Alfred as "the wise and trusted counsellor of Viceroys in the direction of the foreign policy of the Indian Empire"? "Foreign," indeed, in this instance, for probably either the lecturer or the chairman could have recalled instances of ambitious rising civilians who, finding some new Viceroy "quite at sea" and foreign in all their notions regarding India and its needs, have for the time humoured their Excellencies to the top of their bent; but this is not statesmanship. Sir Alfred Lyall, in his airy poetic fashion, remarked that "Russia *might* conquer and annex all the territory up to our Indian frontier." Well, this reminds one of the old adage, "the sky might fall, then we should catch larks."

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON'S MAJOR PREMISS.

THE attack on INDIA with which Lord George Hamilton concluded the Indian debate in the House of Commons last Tuesday week may be considered from several points of view. It might, in the first place, be considered as an example of the fairness and courtesy which becomes a Minister of the Crown holding a high and responsible office. To describe this journal as circulating the grossest falsehoods because of our comments on a speech of which we printed the text is surely the height of extravagance. Again, it might be looked upon as an indication of the temper of those who govern India towards those who are insolent enough to detect any shortcoming in the best of all possible governments. INDIA had been guilty of commenting on a speech of Lord George Hamilton's, and of enquiring which of two or three possible meanings—all of them absurd—was the one intended. Sir William Wedderburn was suspected of being responsible for this guilty paper. Therefore Sir William was to be rigidly boycotted by the India Office and the Secretary of State for India. Surely so absurd a consequence could never be drawn from so weak a premiss if the matter were treated reasonably and without bias or rancour. Or thirdly, to take a still broader view, INDIA having been guilty of the above-mentioned wickedness in this one case, all the critics of the Indian Government and the Secretary of State for India may be left unanswered. "INDIA," we may imagine Lord George saying, "has circulated the grossest falsehoods—*i.e.*, it has criticised one of *my* speeches—therefore, it is unnecessary to take any notice of what it or its friends may say about any question whatsoever." Surely a more ridiculous consequence was never drawn from a more erroneous antecedent.

It is not our intention here to show again that the only instance quoted by Lord George Hamilton in support of his contention, far from constituting even one gross falsehood, could not justify a charge of unfairness. Last week the passage to which Lord George referred and the report on which it was based were given textually for our readers to examine, and we will not go over the same ground again. One word only of the remarks in our last number may possibly need some amplification. We spoke of Lord George Hamilton's "cowardly" accusation. Now "cowardly" was the right word for two reasons. In the first place the charge was made at a time when reply was impossible. Sir William Wedderburn, who was especially alluded to, had already spoken, and even if this had not been so the circumstances were unfavourable to a continuation of the discussion of which Lord George Hamilton's speech was expected to be the close. Moreover by the beautiful arrangement, which some Liberals appear to think so excellent, that this debate shall come on at the very close of the Session, no further opportunity of reply could arise in the House of Commons until next year. Secondly, the effect of Lord George's syllogism was to give him an excuse for not answering the arguments of his critics. He denounces this journal as responsible for the grossest falsehoods. He gives as his one instance a mild criticism of one of his own speeches. And he arrives at the inference that none of his critics or of their arguments is worthy of answer. His accusation is used as a means of escape from the need of answering the charges against himself and against the government for which he is responsible. The word "cowardly" is hardly misplaced.

At all events, it was as a reason for not answering that Lord George Hamilton employed his strong language. Sir William Wedderburn had adverted to the miserable condition of the peasantry in India and once more demanded an enquiry. But Lord George did not deign to reply. It was sufficient to assert that INDIA "circulated the grossest falsehoods" and that Sir William was connected with INDIA. Again, Sir William brought forward the case of the Natus. Now here surely an answer was demanded by every consideration of justice and of honour. Not only are the imprisonment without trial and the present detention of the Natus examples of arbitrary government which should only be justified to the most devoted adherents by the strongest necessity, not only is the Government's most faithful organ in India crying out that the time for release has come, but there are special reasons which touch Lord George Hamilton's honour and reputation, why he should have seized this opportunity to defend his conduct. During the time when the Natus were in gaol and [torn] unable to reply he gave contradictory explan[torn]s of the causes of their imprisonment which could no[t] all be accurate but which all, in different degrees, reflected on the character of these untried prisoners. Surely her Majesty's Secretary of State for India was bound to defend himself when accused of thus slandering two prominent citizens of that country at a time when they were unable to speak in their own defence. But no. He considered it sufficient to say in effect: "INDIA has circulated the grossest falsehoods, and therefore I will defend myself from no charges and examine no grievances which are brought forward by its friends."

Thus, we are to suppose, is all criticism annihilated and the Indian Government left free to follow its own sweet will. The old plan, represented by the advice "No case —abuse the plaintiff's attorney," is transferred to the political world, and the Indians are to suffer, not for their own faults, but for those of their advocates. The Natus are to be kept from their homes, whether they deserve it or not, because they have been defended by the wicked, or even because they have been defended by the associates of the wicked. It might be supposed that those who are responsible for a despotic government like that of India would have thought themselves bound both in honour and in policy to watch carefully for every possible grievance and to listen for every sound which might tell them of injustice or misfortune. But this is not Lord George Hamilton's way of regarding his duty. He asks—not whether the grievance is well founded, or redress possible, but whether he approves of the character and deportment of the advocate. Has he commented on his lordship's speeches? Has he tried to show that one speech of the noble lord's will bear several interpretations, all impertinent or grotesque? Has he ventured—horror of horrors—to twit his lordship with the absurdity? Then is he the utterer of gross falsehoods. Then are he and all his friends unworthy of the notice of the Secretary of State for India. Then must the grievances they bring forward remain without redress. The Government of India is henceforward provided against all criticism. It has but to accuse its accusers, and the battle is won.

It must, indeed, be said for Lord George Hamilton that he is not the originator of this method of meeting criticisms on the Indian Government. The method has long been applied in India, and that not with the sole object of resisting the criticism of the moment, but also to obviate criticism in the future. Is a proposal made for the redress of grievances by a supporter of the Congress? It must be received with the contumely that his conduct deserves. But if it is made by a steady apologist of official shortcomings, by one who is willing to go cap in hand to those in high places, with loud professions of affection to the powers that be, then shall his wishes prevail. He shall be held in honour. He shall have the power to be useful alike to himself and his neighbours. But it can scarcely be expected that a man who is swayed by such considerations and who is ready to play the toady to the powerful is the most likely to take up the cause of the unpopular or the oppressed. If none but such can bring about the redress of grievances, then the worst grievances will remain unredressed. In India, above all places, where so great a gap yawns between rulers and ruled, any discouragement of open criticism is fatal.

But it is not only fatal to the well-being of India. It not only leads to the rulers of that country being left to grope their way in the darkness of ignorance which their courtiers and sycophants, intent only on public and private success, for ever prophesying smooth things, will do nothing to enlighten. It is fatal also to English public life. Can the principle that sturdy and outspoken complaint is a sign of disloyalty be accepted in India and preached in the House of Commons by an English Minister without its finding its way into English public life? Can the practice of only listening to those who sing official praises be acted upon in one department of government without its invading others? This is spoken of as an age of democracy and of freedom. Is it compatible with democracy that officials and their friends should alone be allowed to judge officials? Is it compatible with freedom that open criticism should be held an offence sufficiently heinous to disentitle the offender to a hearing or an answer? The people of England fondly believe that they govern India; but the irresponsible officials of that country go their own way, and try to drown the voice of protest

by charges of falsehood and slander. Yet it is possible that in his latest outburst Lord George Hamilton has gone too far for his purpose. Unsubstantiated charges have a way of recoiling on the accuser. The Secretary for India owes it to himself and his office either to substantiate or to withdraw. If he does neither, the accuser may become the accused.

THE BURDEN OF TAXATION.

SIR HENRY FOWLER in the Indian Budget debate not only expressed his "admiration" of the way in which Lord George Hamilton "had discharged his duty in making his financial statement," but proceeded to supplement his argument. The noble lord, he pointed out, had omitted to call attention to one paragraph in his Memorandum which bore upon the question of taxation. The paragraph was this:—

> If the taxation proper be divided over the population of British India, without making any deduction on account of the portion derived from salt, excise, Customs, etc., which must fall on the inhabitants of the Native States, the burden of taxation per head in the Budget for 1899-1900 is Rs. 1, 4a., 5p., which at the exchange value of 16d. per rupee is equal to not quite 1s. 8½d. If to this be added the amount of the land revenue, the average is raised to Rs. 2, 6a., 7p., or about 3s. 2½d.

That, thought Sir Henry Fowler, was "a very low rate of taxation of any country deriving the advantage India did from its Government." The form of statement is comparative and inexact, but we believe we do Sir Henry no injustice in supposing that he stands by his old opinion that India enjoys a very easy taxation, for which she ought to be humbly grateful to her English administrators.

The fact is, to begin with, that the figures of the official Memorandum, on which the taxation per head is based, are completely misleading. They give as "taxation proper" Rx.29,775,000, and as land revenue Rx.27,641,900; and, dividing these figures by the estimated population, the officials discover the taxation to be 1s. 8½d. or 3s. 2½d. a head, according as land revenue is excluded or included. But the total Budget estimate is very different from the sum of these two amounts; it stands at Rx. 101,961,000, which gives a taxation per head of Rs. 4, 6a., or substantially twice the amount indicated by the Memorandum and pressed on the admiring attention of the House by Sir Henry Fowler. There may be small items that ought to be deducted from the total, but these could hardly reduce the taxation per head to less than 5s., even if we take the Exchange equivalent, as the officials do. But here is a case where Exchange is totally irrelevant. What is wanted is to find out, not what the taxpayer would get for his money in English coin, but what is the sacrifice that his taxes impose upon him.

Sir Henry Fowler, then, rejoices over 3s. 2½d. per head as a very low rate of taxation. We cannot agree with him. It is indeed obvious that 3s. 2½d. is a less sum of money than £2 11s. 8d., the rate in England. But, strangely enough, Sir Henry's statesmanlike intellect stops at that childish stage of the problem. We confess we did and do expect a Front Bench statesman who has been Secretary for India, who has achieved a reputation for finance, and who is a lawyer by profession, to take some other factors into consideration when he professes to make a comparison between the sacrifice involved in taxation in different countries. Has it really been left to us at this time of day to awaken Sir Henry to the consideration that whether the sacrifice of the taxpayer is great or small does not depend upon the particular figures of the tax, but upon the ratio between the tax and the amount of the taxpayer's earnings, and that even the same ratio is increasingly burdensome as the income is small? The average income in England is, we understand, somewhere near £40 per head, and the taxation may be taken at £2 11s. 8d. The ratio is about 6·5 per cent. The average income in India is much disputed. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, who has gone into the matter with his usual thoroughness, will not admit that it stands higher than Rs. 20. Mr. William Digby, on an entirely independent calculation, reached Rs. 21. But let us, with our accustomed liberality, take Rs. 27; for in 1882 Lord Cromer (then Sir Evelyn Baring) would not commit himself to a higher estimate. The ratio is about 9 per cent. as against 6·5 per cent. in England—not ludicrously less, but very near 50 per cent. more. So much for Sir Henry Fowler's boast. That there may be no doubt as to his position in the matter, let us recall what he said in the House in the debate on Mr. Samuel Smith's motion for a full enquiry into the finances of India (August 15, 1894):—

> Whereas in England the taxation is £2 11s. 8d. per head, in Scotland £2 8s. 1d. per head, and in Ireland £1 12s. 5d. per head, the Budget which I shall present to-morrow will show that the taxation per head in India is something like 2s. 6d., or 1-20th the taxation of the United Kingdom and 1-13th of that of Ireland.

Sir Henry was speaking of "taxation proper"—an illusory abstraction. But, apart from that, it is obvious that he completely misunderstood the significance of his statistics. Nor does it appear that he understands them even yet; otherwise it is hard to believe that he would persist in such a gross misconception of the burden of Indian taxation.

From what he said in 1894 it will be seen that Sir Henry does not admit land revenue to be taxation. He has got the English landlord and tenant on the brain—a disease that has scarred deeply certain parts of British Indian policy and administration. He defended the view at some length in his speech introducing the Indian Budget on August 16, 1894, citing John Stuart Mill and Fawcett, and declaring that "in India they nationalised the land centuries ago." The question, of course, depends not on the terms of discussion but on the facts—on the extent of the validity of the landlord and tenant analogy. These facts have emerged much more clearly in later times. Mr. Sullivan, one of the Indian Famine Commissioners, discussed the point elaborately in Part II of the Report (page 183), protesting earnestly "against the process of reasoning by which it was sought to uphold the theory put forward by Mr. Wilson that the land revenue of India is of the nature of rent, and is not raised by taxation;" and he arrived at the conclusion "that the State is not the owner of the land, and therefore the people cannot be its tenants, nor can the share of the produce of the land which they contribute towards the public necessity be designated rent. It is therefore a tax, and as such must be taken into account in calculating the incidence of taxation." Mr. B. H. Baden-Powell, in his able and careful volume on "The Land Revenue and its Administration in British India," places the matter in the true light (p. 49):—

> There are no doubt cases where Government is the immediate owner of particular lands, as it is of all waste and unoccupied land in general; but we are speaking of cultivated land in villages and estates. The Government is certainly not owner of this: the utmost it does is to regard the land as hypothecated to itself as security (in the last resort) for the land revenue assessed on it. The Government also fulfils some of the functions of a landlord, inasmuch as it watches over the welfare of the agricultural population, it advances funds to landholders to help them in making improvements—well-sinking, embanking, draining, and the like. It is these vestiges of the landlord character claimed by the former rulers, and perhaps the sort of residuary right which the Government still has in provinces where the landholders are called "occupants" not "owners" (*eo nomine*) that keep alive the question whether land revenue is in any sense a "rent." Practically, the discussion is a profitless war of words, and we may be content to speak of the "land revenue" as a thing *per se*. It *operates* as a tax on agricultural incomes—a contribution to the State out of the profits of land-cultivation, just as the "income-tax" is a contribution out of the proceeds of other industries and occupations.

Now it seems to us that the point for a statesman to fasten on is the practical operation of the institution, and Mr. Baden-Powell says "it *operates* as a tax on agricultural incomes." On former occasions we have pointed out how severely it is made to operate in many cases, and with what disastrous results.

But we must press the point a little more deeply than the average statistics reach. The average person in the body is rather an elusive entity, and it is necessary for the statesman to think of the actual men, women and children of the State. There can be no question that far the larger number will fall below the average line, and that the denser portion of the class above it will lie more or less closely to it. That is to say, by far the majority of the Indian people realise an income under Rs. 27, or 36s. per annum, and a ghastly tale of them very much less. In 1881 Sir William Hunter, then Director-General of Statistics under the Government of India, shocked the complacency of those that imagined all was right with India by the deliberate, incontrovertible and awful statement that "forty millions of the people of India habitually go through life on insufficient food." In 1883 the Duke of Argyll, with the official experience of Secretary of State for India, wrote that "of chronic poverty and of permanent reduction to the lowest level of subsistence, such as prevail only too widely among the vast populations of

rural India, we have no example in the Western world." The words are not a whit less true to-day than they were more than half a generation back. So late as 1885 Sir Auckland Colvin, an ex-Finance Minister, stated from his place in the Viceroy's Council that "the masses of the people are men whose income at the best is barely sufficient to afford them the necessary sustenance to support life, living as they do on the barest necessaries of life." Indeed we are getting but too well accustomed to the descent of Indians below "the lowest level of existence," and some officials, as we have recently seen, attempt to save our sensitiveness by a less harrowing disposition of the statistics. True these wretched millions escape "taxation proper," as well as land revenue collection; but for all that the pressure from above must certainly aggravate their lot. We have no sympathy to waste on rich men under taxation, but we do feel with the Mahárájá of Dharbhanga for "the lower middle classes" for whom he pleaded in vain in the Viceroy's Council (March 27). We grumble in England that the line of exemption from income tax is so low, but what should we say to a tax of four pies in the rupee, or 5d. in the £, on incomes from Rs.500 up to Rs.2,000, and five pies, or 6¼d., on incomes of Rs.2,000 and upwards? The Mahárájá pleaded for the raising of the minimum to the rupee equivalent of £100 a year—in vain, notwithstanding the record surplus. And though the very poorest escape other taxation they must be frightfully wretched to escape the salt tax—that crowning disgrace to the administration. But the final test of the severity of taxation lies in this: Can the taxation be extended to fresh objects, or can it be increased upon the existing objects? If the Government has reached the last turn of the screw, there is an end to the question whether the taxation is high or low, whether absolutely or in relation to other countries. Lord George Hamilton himself has admitted that "the Indian Government is not in possession of a reserve of taxation." But, though Sir Henry Fowler will at once accept Lord George Hamilton's statement, we will fortify it with the authority of the *Times*: "We should not forget that India has to maintain her solvency, and to pay for her peace and prosperity by a taxation which her Imperial and Provincial financiers alike declare to have reached the limits of safety." Yet Sir Henry Fowler launches himself on flights of rhetoric over "the very low rate of taxation" of impoverished India—a country of appalling poverty and taxed practically to the last pie.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON AND "*INDIA*."

OUR CRITICISM JUSTIFIED.

SILENCE OF PARTY APOLOGISTS.

Lord George Hamilton has not yet attempted to substantiate, nor has he apologised for, the sweeping accusation against this journal by means of which he evaded reply to the most serious criticisms in the course of the recent debate on the "Indian Budget."

We again call upon him either to prove his charge or to withdraw it.

As will be seen from the articles printed below, the matter has excited some comment in the Press. Our remarks in INDIA last week—including the text of the passage from Lord G. Hamilton's speech of July, 1898—were circulated to every journal of importance which had reported Lord G. Hamilton's attack upon us. So far as we can discover, every journal which has since referred to the subject has justified our criticism, while the organs of Lord G. Hamilton's party neither publish our rejoinder nor refer to it.

The *Daily Chronicle* (August 12) wrote:—

The bulk of Lord George Hamilton's speech the other day was taken up with a violent and unmanly attack on Sir William Wedderburn, a politician whose very mildness should disarm the most furious critic. The burden of the attack was that Sir William Wedderburn was the proprietor of INDIA, and that INDIA said nasty things about Lord George Hamilton. The particular nasty thing that Lord George Hamilton objected to was the assertion that he had spoken of India as a "savage" country. We can quite imagine that he objected to being saddled with so objectionable and unpopular a phrase. But what are the facts? INDIA sets them forth in its issue this week, and we are bound to say that Lord George Hamilton has no one but himself to blame. On July 2, 1898, he spoke as follows in defence of the Indian Civil Service:—

> If their Empire abroad was extending to an immeasurably greater extent than that of any other country, one of the main reasons of that advance and progress was that there were any number of young men who, at any moment when they were called upon, were ready to go to a savage, foreign country taking their lives in their hands.

On this passage INDIA remarked:—

> Does this mean that India is a savage country, which is only becoming civilised by the efforts of the English—India which presented an aspect of ordered civilisation which was already ancient when the ancestors of the English were still nomads, and which has endured unbroken to the present day?

This seems to us a most fair criticism, and for Lord George Hamilton to talk about "the grossest falsehoods" only shows of what very light stuff he is made.

The *Manchester Guardian* (August 14) wrote:—

By his vehement attack on Sir William Wedderburn during the Indian debate last week Lord George Hamilton has recalled attention to an indiscretion which it would have been wiser to let people forget. He complained that Sir William Wedderburn was connected with a paper called INDIA, which, he said, circulated "the grossest falsehoods, which went out to India and came back repeated a hundredfold in the Native Press." The foundation on which he built this sweeping accusation was that the paper had represented him as speaking of India as a savage country. In repelling the charge in its current issue, INDIA quotes from a speech delivered in July of last year in which Lord George Hamilton, in congratulating the Indian Government on successfully surmounting plague, famine, war, and sedition, complained of the attacks made on those in positions of great responsibility, and said that

> If their Empire abroad was extending to an immeasurably greater extent than that of any other country, one of the main reasons of that advance and progress was that there were any number of young men who at any moment when they were called upon were ready to go to a savage, foreign country, taking their lives in their hands, and by force of character and foresight they were enabled in an immeasurably short time to establish humanity and civilised order.

In commenting upon this speech INDIA protested against the use of language which, to say the least of it, could be interpreted as including India in an imputation of savagery. In answer to the uncivil attack of Lord George Hamilton INDIA very pertinently reprints the protest together with a report of the indiscretion which called it forth.

The *Star* (August 12), in an article headed "An Abuse of Language," said:—

It is not a pretty thing for one gentleman to tell another that he "circulates," even through his paper, "the grossest falsehoods." When the first gentleman is a Queen's Minister, and the second a member of Parliament, one would suppose that the former would be very sure of his ground. It is, however, exactly the phrase that Lord George Hamilton thought fit on Tuesday last to use in connexion with Sir William Wedderburn, who is connected with INDIA, and in support of this astonishing attack on one of the mildest of men Lord George maintained that he had been accused of calling India a "savage" country. It would certainly appear to be the sort of remark that anyone with a reputation for intelligence would be anxious to disavow, though we hardly see why Lord George should have minded it. And he has by no means improved his position, seeing that INDIA is able to quote his own speech on July 2, 1898, when, referring to the Civil Service, he said that one of the reasons of British greatness was that any number of our young men were ready at any moment "to go to a savage, foreign country, taking their lives in their hands." Either Lord George was talking about India, or he was talking deliberate nonsense. Sir William Wedderburn's paper said as much, which may have been unkind, but so far from being a gross falsehood, was an easily demonstrable fact.

The *Morning Leader* (August 14), in an article headed "Lord George Hamilton's Violence," said:—

At the fag-end of his speech during last Tuesday's apology for a debate on the affairs of our 250 million fellow-subjects in India, Lord George Hamilton roused himself to make a violent attack on INDIA. That journal, he said, "circulated the grossest falsehoods." It is not a pleasant charge for any editor to have levelled at him under the privilege of Parliament, but fortunately for INDIA Lord George proceeded to specify the particular "falsehood" on which he based this comprehensive attack. He had been accused of calling India a "savage" country, an absurdity of which Lord George very justly felt only a chaotic intelligence could be guilty. The reply of INDIA is to quote a speech of Lord George Hamilton reported on July 2, 1898, in which he observed that if the extension of our Empire was immeasurably vast,

> One of the main reasons of that advance and progress was that there were any number of young men who, at any moment when

they were called upon, were ready to go to a savage, foreign country, taking their lives in their hands.

Now Lord George had prefaced these remarks by claiming that "if he turned to the department for which he was responsible —India—he thought they might congratulate themselves and the Indian Government," and so INDIA felt justified in asking whether India was the "savage foreign" country referred to or not. If it was not, where was the relevance of the argument? If it was, why did the Indian Secretary betray an ignorance so alarming? It is this dilemma which Lord George Hamilton, by an abuse of words which is nothing less than amazing, stigmatises as one of the grossest of falsehoods. Lord George may have some extraordinary administrative qualities, which he is artist enough entirely to conceal from the naked eye, but it is the melancholy fact that when he is annoyed no one knows what he is going to say next—least of all Lord George Hamilton. His indignation makes—not verses but—vituperation.

The *Westminster Gazette* (August 16) wrote:—

The debating tactics adopted by the Secretary for India are once more called in question—this time by our contemporary INDIA, which indignantly repudiates the charges of publishing falsehoods brought against it by Lord George Hamilton the other day in the House of Commons. In proof of its assertions, INDIA publishes in its current number the remarks in a former issue to which the Secretary for India alluded, and the speech on which they were based. In these it is apparent to any fair-minded reader that they afford not the slightest justification for the charge in question.

THE SEA POST OFFICE.

LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

The following letter has been received by Sir W. Wedderburn, M.P.:—

India Office, Whitehall, London, S.W.,
August 3, 1899.

Sir,—With reference to the question put by you in the House of Commons on May 4 last, respecting the amount of work devolving on sorters of the Sea Post Office, between Bombay and Aden, in consequence of the reduction in the rates of postage of letters, I am directed by the Secretary of State for India in Council to forward, for your information, an extract from a report on the subject by the Director-General of the the Post Office in India.

(Dated June 21, 1899, paras. 3 to 5.)

In the letter transmitting that report, the Government of India observe:—"The pressure for short periods is necessarily severe, but, for the greater part of their time, the sorters have little or nothing to do; and it is obvious that the special conditions of their service do not admit of a more regular distribution of work."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
(Signed) A. GODLEY.

Sir W. Wedderburn, Bart., M.P.

Copy of extract of Report by Director-General of Post Office of India, dated June 21, 1899:—

3. The actual facts of the case are shortly as follows:—

The average number of mail bags disposed of by the sorters of the Aden-Bombay sorting section on the inward voyage to Bombay was about 600 in March, 1894, about 670 in March, 1895, and about 770 in March, 1897. In 1898 the average number had risen to 860, and the present average number, based on the figures for March and April, 1899, is about 960. The great majority of these bags contain newspaper and packet mails which have been constantly increasing in weight of late years, as the figures quoted on the margin will show; and the total number of the letter mail bags received from the General Post Office, London, does not exceed 70 on an average at the present time. The increase in the letter mails, owing to the reduction of postage, can be estimated only in a general way. According to the ordinary rules all the mails from the United Kingdom are weighed on two occasions in the year—once in January and once in June—and it would be unsafe to found conclusions on the single weighment made in January of this year. A special record, however, of the weight of the letter mail has been kept for four voyages in April and May, 1899, and it is estimated, on the result of these weighments, that the number of letters now being received each week from the United Kingdom is 12,000 to 15,000 in excess of the number received by the corresponding mail last year, though some part of this increase is due to the ordinary development of correspondence. This represents an addition of 10 to 12 bags each week to the number of letter mail bags.

Jan.,	1895,	lb. 30,477
June,	1896,	,, 34,387
June,	1897,	,, 36,152
Jan.,	1898,	,, 43,767
June,	1898,	,, 35,910
Jan.,	1899,	,, 39,976
April,	1899,	,, 37,732

4. Now as to the work of the Aden-Bombay Sea Post Office, it will be seen that the amount of the mail matter to be dealt with by this special sorting section has been constantly on the increase of late years, the real increase being in the newspaper and packet mails. This, of course, has received the attention of the Postmaster-General of Bombay and myself. Only last year I sanctioned a revised scheme of pay for the Sea Post Office and an increase in the number of sorters in each set. This involved a monthly increase of Rs. 450 in expenditure, and in point of fact two additional sorters were appointed to each set in December last, so that the new year might be begun with a strong staff of sorters. The present establishment, the Postmaster-General, Bombay, reports, has not more to do than the staff of five years ago, but the time at the disposal of the sorters is rather shorter owing to the quicker transit from Aden to Bombay. During this transit, which occupies five days, the sorters have to work for twelve and even at times thirteen hours a day, but on arrival at Bombay they have eight days off with practically nothing to do before they are called upon to go to sea again, and on the homeward voyage they have always light work up to Aden, and then three days rest at that place before turning round. In other words, out of twenty-one days the sorters have hard work for five days, light work for five days, and almost nothing to do for eleven days. An establishment working under these conditions can reasonably be required to work for exceptionally long hours for short periods, and the staff is composed of men born and brought up in a tropical climate. It may be added that the Postmaster-General, Bombay, is maintaining a close check on the present working of the Sea Post Office; in March last he was asked by me for a full report on this subject; and if as a result of the statistics which are still being kept it should be found that a further increase in establishment is necessary, the matter will receive immediate attention.

5. I believe that it will not be considered necessary that I should add anything to this statement of facts; but it may be explained that there is a practical difficulty in obtaining sorting accommodation on board the P. and O. steamer for a constantly increasing staff.

THE DEBATE ON THE INDIAN BUDGET.

OPINIONS OF THE BRITISH PRESS.

THE "DAILY NEWS."

The war to which Lord George Hamilton referred was the result of a gratuitous and unjustifiable attack upon the independence of Chitral. That crude and reckless example of the forward policy cost India many millions of rupees, which might as well, or better, have been thrown into the Ganges. For a sum which the revenues of India could ill afford to bear, we purchased the temporary, if not the permanent, alienation of the Afridi tribes on the Afghan border, whose friendship is worth all the gold in Asia. This frontier war, bad in its inception, and worse in its performance, was the culpable result of a silly determination to reverse the policy of the late Government because it had been theirs. But we need not argue the point. The present Viceroy, who has hitherto been nothing if not forward, is now reverting to the sagacious policy of Lord Lawrence. Four millions were squandered upon a worthless annexation, in which nobody took any interest except those who objected to it, and the Government of India now acknowledges that they were right. We trust that this striking and instructive fact, which is an admitted fact and cannot be denied, will encourage any faint-hearted critic of Indian administration, and will help to dispel the ludicrous fallacy that no one can understand India who has not "been there." . . . . An amendment moved by Mr. Caldwell, of all people, and seconded by Sir William Wedderburn, who thoroughly understands the subject, led to a remarkable speech from Sir Henry Fowler. The amendment declared that the salary of the Indian Secretary should be placed upon the Estimates, and that the Indian Budget should be referred to a Select Committee. There is not much in referring it to a Select or any other Committee, so long as the House of Commons, from whom the Committee must derive their power, has no right to touch a single figure in it. The salary of the Indian Secretary is at present paid by the people of India. If it were voted by the House of Commons, it would have to be paid by the people of the United Kingdom, and perhaps that might not promote the popularity of India among the working classes. But really the sum is too small to matter much, one way or the other.

THE "DAILY CHRONICLE."

The Indian Government collect their revenue in silver rupees, but have to pay in England some £16,000,000 sterling in gold. Formerly ten rupees remitted from India were worth £1 in London; in 1894-5 it was necessary to remit 18 1-3 rupees for every £1 payable in London. Consequently in 1894-5 there was a loss by exchange on every £1 paid in London of 8 1-3 rupees (*i.e.*, the number in excess of the par of exchange, which is 10). In 1898-9, owing to the rise in exchange, 15 rupees were worth £1 in London, consequently loss by exchange fell from 8 1-3 rupees on every £1 to only 5 rupees. This difference of 3 1-3 rupees on the £16,000,000 payable in London, with other savings indirectly dependent on exchange, makes a difference of many millions a year to the Indian Treasury. A week ago we showed that the rise in exchange since 1894-5 saved the Government of India in 1898-9 no less than Rx. 5,791,400. In other words, had exchange remained at the level at which it stood in 1894-5 the surplus of four millions would be a deficit of nearly two millions. Even in 1896-7 and 1897-8 exchange was improving, but famine and war swallowed up the saving it effected, and so tended to throw this improvement into the back-ground. Now that famine

and war have happily ceased for a season, the full effect of this great rise in exchange is manifest, and it is what we have indicated. Yet in the face of these facts the Secretary of State for India talks with childish *naiveté* about the recuperative powers of India. But for the sudden turn which exchange took in 1894-5, with just the same revenue and just the same evidence of recuperation—or want of evidence—there would be no surplus to-day, big or little, but a yawning deficit. With such a fundamental error at the root of his exposition, it is hardly worth while to follow the Secretary of State in his sociological and economic heresies. Lord George Hamilton on Indian finance is at present a necessary affliction, but Lord George Hamilton on theories of population is not to be borne with, least of all in the dog-days.

THE "MORNING LEADER."

The chief opposition to the motion came from Sir Henry Fowler, who was Secretary for India in the late Liberal administration, but whose speeches on Indian topics are apt to provoke smiling satisfaction among the supporters of the present Government. One would think that the applause with which his Indian speeches are as a rule greeted by Tories and the dismay which they spread among Liberals might at least suggest to so shrewd a man that there is something wrong. But apparently he is content to reflect that "Indian questions ought not to be party questions." With that statement most of us can cordially agree. Nothing could be better than that the House of Commons, without distinction of party, should bring an unprejudiced judgment to bear upon questions which are none the less important because they are intricate, and upon grievances which are none the less urgent because they have no votes behind them. But that is not the procedure which Sir Henry Fowler applauds, nor is it possible under our existing system. The Secretary of State for India is a member of the Cabinet. To censure him is to censure the Cabinet of which he is a member. Therefore the whole strength and the whole machinery of the Parliamentary majority are employed in his defence in any Indian debate of importance. (For example the tellers against the motion last night were the Government whips.) When therefore a Secretary of State, being fully assured that his own party will vote with him, declares that "Indian questions ought not to be party questions," he really means that the Opposition ought not to oppose. In other words, where Indian affairs are concerned, Liberals and Tories should form themselves into a mutual admiration society. That plan may meet the wishes, and increase the comfort, of Ministers and ex-Ministers. But it is not precisely the highest ideal of public duty. Sir Henry Fowler apparently believes that duty requires him to win the cheers of his political opponents at the expense of his political allies. A saner interpretation of his own maxim would be, we submit, to consider proposals on their merits, even though they be tainted by having their origin on his own side of the House.

THE "INVESTORS' REVIEW."

As usual, the small band of Indian philanthropists and reformers who surround Sir William Wedderburn endeavoured to infuse some practical purpose into the debate, but as Sir William justly said, they were regarded as bores and faddists repeating an ancient tale of woe as if the Indian cultivator was "a subject for light and humorous treatment." Sir William has indeed managed to excite a furious spirit of wrath in the mind of the Secretary of State for India, who as good as denounced him as a liar at the close of his reply; but that also does not interest us much, except as betraying perhaps a greater influence wielded by the small body of Indian reformers than his angry lordship is willing to admit. As for Sir Henry Fowler, he bubbled over in blessings as usual, and had nothing but the most optimistic language to bestow upon the India Office, the Indian Government, and all it says and does. We know Sir Henry in the City, and can smile at his enthusiasms, poor man. Probably, however, he was quite right in his contention that the amendment moved by Mr. Caldwell, and seconded by Sir William Wedderburn, was inadmissible because England does not yet pay Lord George Hamilton's salary. There is a good time coming, and then perhaps the amendment or one similar can be moved with effect. What we think about the currency experiment has also already been said, and we shall not resume that subject at present. Let those who can go shoot, and leave poor India alone with her plague and famines.

THE "TIMES."

The Secretary for India did not leave a very promising opening for the gentlemen who love to picture India as going to the dogs, so they turned their attention chiefly to complaining that the House of Commons takes no interest in Indian affairs, that the Indian Budget comes on too late in the Session, and, worst of all, that due heed is not paid to the alleged grievances which form their political stock-in-trade. For once we have some reason to be grateful to these gentlemen. They drew from Sir Henry Fowler a vigorous defence of the system by which India is administered, and an eloquent vindication of the Imperial Government. Parliament, as he showed without difficulty by a simple reference to many recent and conspicuous examples, never fails to exhibit the most lively interest in Indian affairs. It does not wait for the Indian Budget, but is ready at any period of the Session to call the Secretary of State to account for whatever may be deemed to be in want of explanation or defence. Its control over him, and through him over the Government of India, is theoretically and practically as complete as over the Secretary for War or for the Colonies. But Parliament, fortunately, has not yet adopted the policy so assiduously pressed upon it by people like Sir William Wedderburn. It abstains upon the whole from meddling with the details of Indian administration. Sir Henry Fowler did good service by showing how amply these details are already provided for. The Secretary for India is provided with a council of experts the like of which, we regret to say, is not at the disposal of the chief of any other great department of State. The India Council is in permanent session, it has to meet once a week all the year round, it is invested by Act of Parliament with the control of Indian finance, and it is composed of men versed in Indian affairs. It is to this eminently competent body, together with the Secretary of State here, and the Viceroy similarly assisted in India, that Parliament wisely leaves a wide discretion in the conduct of Indian administration, without, however, relaxing in any degree its own supreme control on great questions of public policy. Far from being perfunctory in its treatment of India, the Parliament of this country has provided it with one of the most fully equipped and most successful administrations that the world has seen. Sir Henry Fowler refuses to drag that magnificent organisation in the mire of party controversy, and if ever a day should come when the House of Commons declines to follow his example India will indeed have a grievance, and England will be in a fair way to lose an Empire.

THE "ECONOMIST."

One result of deferring the Indian Budget statement in the House of Commons until the very end of the Session is to deprive it, as a rule, of any real interest. All the statistics, the accounts, and the estimates with which the Secretary of State has to deal have been published months before, and equally belated is anything he has to say on questions of financial policy, which, save on exceptional occasions, have been expounded long before by the Indian Minister of Finance when introducing his Budget. Consequently, although Lord George Hamilton told his story in an interesting enough fashion, yet so far as the financial position of India is concerned, it was an old story, and added little or nothing to what was already known to those concerned with Indian affairs. . . . Lord George Hamilton was, we think, inclined to make a little too much of this rapid change from a big deficit to substantial surpluses as evidence of inherent soundness in the financial condition of India. For the most part, it is due to the cessation of the heavy extraordinary expenditure on war and famine, and what expansion there has been in the revenue is to some extent attributable to the fact that the land revenue, in which remissions or temporary suspensions had to be made, is now not only being collected in full, but is swollen by the payments of the arrears that were allowed to accumulate. The other branches of revenue have not displayed any noteworthy elasticity.

THE "STAR."

It is as absurd to say that Parliament controls Indian affairs as to say that the County Council regulates the main drainage of the moon. A small instalment of control would be secured by placing the salary of the Secretary of State on the Estimates. Why should Lord George Hamilton alone of all the Ministers escape the direct criticism of policy implied in a motion to reduce his salary? And why should the Indian debate be postponed until the fag-end of the Session? Surely if our Imperialists are as proud of India as they profess to be they might find time to discuss her affairs before the life has gone out of the Session. Why, too, should the House of Commons shrink from grappling with the organised mystifications of Indian finance? At present the Secretary of State vomits forth an undigested mass of figures which drives the House into the deepest depths of despair. But if a Select Committee were appointed to examine the accounts and estimates every year, and to report to the House, things would be manageable, and members would be able to regain the control which they have hopelessly lost. One would think that such a reform would be enthusiastically supported by all Liberals. But Sir Henry Fowler thinks that so far as India is concerned all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds. The truth is, he has been Secretary of State himself, and perhaps hopes to be Secretary of State again.

THE "WESTMINSTER GAZETTE."

We deal elsewhere with the actual figures which Lord George Hamilton explained to the House, and we will only say here that we hope he is not too sanguine in his reliance on the recuperative powers of India. The sudden change from deficit to surplus is due in no small measure to the rise in the exchange value of the rupee, and though that may justify the monetary policy of the Government of India, it can scarcely be regarded as evidence of prosperity. There is also, even this year, a possibility of famine, which may rather seriously disturb the estimated surplus. However, we gladly acknowledge that the Government of India have gone through some of the worst of experiences with much less damage than might have been expected. Lord Elgin deserves a considerable part of the credit, but Lord Curzon also, we hope, is going to prove to us through his new frontier policy that certain obvious morals from recent events have been taken to heart.

THE "PALL MALL GAZETTE."

There is a good deal of force in the contention that the Indian Budget should be taken earlier in the Session rather than at the very fag end of it, when, as Mr. Harwood says, "only a few wearied members are present, with all the intellect they have pretty well used up, and their physical energy equally exhausted." No possible harm can be done by full and fair discussion of Indian affairs; they will bear the light of day, and the more they are looked into the more will the integrity and justice of our rule in India be vindicated. Cranks of the stamp of Sir William Wedderburn, however, are mischievous, and we have little enough admiration for the thousand and one other self-constituted authorities who meddle with things they understand imperfectly, if indeed they understand them at all. But even these men are not without their uses, for they stimulate interest in a question of vast importance to all who have regard for the welfare of the Empire. Therefore we deprecate the practice of leaving the Indian Budget until the Session is at its last dying gasp, when neither the number nor the condition of the members present tells for full discussion. There may possibly be something in the contention that the Secretary of State is enabled, consequently upon the delay between the publication of the Budget in India and its discussion here, to tell the House of Commons some things which the Financial Member of Council could not bring before his colleagues. But this is a small matter compared with the advantage that would accrue from earlier presentation, which would remove all grounds for the appearance of a grievance and show how very little serious material for complaint the self-elected champions of the natives have.

Imperial Parliament.

Tuesday, August 8.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

THE "INDIAN BUDGET".

JUDICIAL AND EXECUTIVE DUTIES.

THE CALCUTTA MUNICIPAL BILL.

[*Continued from page* 79.]

MR. PICKERSGILL.

Mr. PICKERSGILL said: I have upon the paper an amendment, "That the separation of judicial from executive functions in India is imperatively and urgently necessary in the interests of the administration of justice." Unfortunately I shall be precluded by the rules of the House from moving that amendment, but I desire to speak upon it, and I shall confine myself to that subject. What I complain of is shortly and simply this: That in India the thief-catcher and policeman and revenue officer is also the judge. Now the functions of a policeman are useful and necessary, but they do not tend to develop the judicial faculty; and when the same person who has hunted down a supposed criminal may forthwith ascend the judgment-seat and try him the case is really so gross as hardly to need argument. Yet that is the system in India. The District Officer is the head of the police, and he has also jurisdiction to try (and does try either in person or through his immediate subordinates) offences for which a maximum punishment of two years' rigorous imprisonment may be awarded by him. Instead of this system I propose that there should be a chain of subordination for judicial duties, and another chain of subordination for executive duties, and that these two chains should not intermingle but run along on parallel lines. The late Mr. Ghose, an eminent barrister, prepared a long list of cases illustrating the evils of the present system, but I do not propose to rely upon cases at all. The system itself as it exists all over India must obviously "poison the springs of justice." But let us see what its most distinguished champion, Sir Charles Elliott, has to say in its favour. His first argument is that "all power should be collected in the hands of a single official." My answer is that there may be stages of society in which the union of executive and judicial functions is necessary or expedient, and it is possible that in India itself there may be some very backward and primitive parts to which the system may be adapted; but I say that throughout by far the greater part of India such a system is an anachronism and must be fertile in mischief. Secondly, Sir Charles Elliott says that "there is no real distinction in kind between the action taken before and after the trial." I need not seriously deal with such an argument. If it represents the views of District Officers in India, nothing could more effectually prove the necessity for the change which I propose. Thirdly, Sir Charles Elliott contends that "the District Officer must retain his judicial power for use upon exceptional occasions." But exceptional cases are surely the last which the District Officer ought to try; because in such cases, where feeling of a political or other kind intrudes, the suspicion at least, if not the fact, of bias is almost inevitable. I need not pursue this line of objection further, because the highest authorities apparently do not defend the existing system upon its merits, but they demur on financial grounds to the change proposed. Lord Kimberley said that we should have to "double the staff." [Sir Henry Fowler: Hear, hear.] I am surprised that the right hon. gentleman below me cheers that statement, for it goes far beyond anything that even Sir Charles Elliott has ever said. Sir Charles seems to admit that the proposed change could, by mere re-arrangement of duties, be carried out in about half the districts in Bengal without extra cost. But Mr. Dutt has drawn up a definite and detailed scheme as far as Bengal is concerned, by which he shows that a complete separation between judicial and executive functions in that Presidency might be effected at the additional cost only of some 20 or 30 sub-deputy collectors. Sir, I believe that the proposal which I submit would have beneficial results in many respects. I am afraid that it is established upon irresistible evidence from many diverse quarters that the police in India are rapacious and oppressive. It is the system which is to blame, not the men. If the District Officer were relieved of judicial duties, he would have more time to devote to the management and control and (it may be) the re-organisation of the police. And, further, at present there is a tendency to hush up the malpractices of the police. In 1896 a circular was issued by some magistrates in which subordinate magistrates were requested not to comment adversely in their judgments on the conduct of the police concerned in any case. But, sir, I believe that these proposals would also have still more important results. I have noticed with much regret in recent years on the part of executive officers of all ranks in India a growing impatience of the restraints of law. It is a significant phenomenon, because it is altogether alien to the genius of the English people. The sense of law, respect of law, are more deeply ingrained in Englishmen than in any other nation known to history, with the possible exception of the Romans. Hence this restiveness and this impatience under the restraints of law to which I refer are more serious marks of deterioration of character in Englishmen than they would be in the case of other nationalities. Recently attention has been drawn to the frequency of gross outrages committed by British soldiers and civilians of a low social class upon Indians. The authorities are, I am sure, most anxious to put down these outrages. But may I respectfully suggest that the most effective method of re-establishing the reign of law in India would be by beginning at the top? Enforce respect for law upon the heads of your Revenue Department, on your Lieutenant-Governors, and even upon the Secretary of State himself. It is not long since Sir Charles Elliott claimed as representing the Executive Government to call to account the Judicial Bench in Bengal. When very much the same thing was done in the Transvaal some organs of public opinion in this country shrieked with indignation. Of course, two wrongs do not make a right. I condemn as strongly as any man interference with the independence of judges wherever it occurs. But I say it is a pity that, while we are ready enough to condemn our neighbours, we do not put our own house in order. Again, take the case of the arrest on railway property within the territory of the Nizam of a person charged with an offence alleged to have been committed at Simla. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council set aside the arrest and avoided all the proceedings, and that august tribunal declared in effect that the notification of the Governor-General in Council, which purported to confer the jurisdiction under which the arrest was made, was simply wastepaper. Take a third case: Fisher *v.* Secretary of State for India, decided by the Privy Council a few months ago. That tribunal declared that the Government of Madras had been "wrong throughout," and that they had issued an illegal order which could have "no more effect than anything done at the dictation of a lawless mob." Lastly, there is the case of the Natus. Their property was seized, and that act was admittedly illegal, at least as regards part of the property. The imprisonment of the Natus purported to proceed under a Regulation of 1827 which provided for persons being "placed under restraint without any immediate view to ulterior proceedings of a judicial nature." Surely the use of the word "immediate" implies that a person cannot be detained for an indefinite time under this regulation. It is now more than two years since the arrest was made, and I say that it is high time either to put this man upon his trial or to set him at liberty. In conclusion, I appeal to the noble lord to take the subject of my amendment into his most serious consideration. I am not sure that the friends of India might not do well for the next year or two (if necessary) to concentrate their efforts upon this reform, with which I believe the pure administration of justice in India is vitally concerned. (Cheers.)

SIR A. HICKMAN.

Sir A. HICKMAN drew attention to the practice of the Indian authorities in purchasing railway material in America instead of in this country. He frankly admitted that if the Government of India wanted something very quickly which they could not get in this country in the time, they were perfectly justified in getting it where they could; but he submitted that with a little foresight this extreme hurry could in most cases be avoided. They must not presume that because the price of an article was less in America than in this country the article was cheaper. Locomotive engines, for example, were very largely purchased in America, but it had been shown that whereas the American engine was cheaper and was turned out of the manufacturer's hands quicker than the English engine, the latter ran more miles before it required repairs than the American locomotive did. The reason that the American makers could supply locomotives very much quicker than the English makers was that the American engine was made to a standard pattern by machinery, and the parts were interchangeable, but the hand-made locomotive was in the end cheaper than the machine-made one.

MR. PERKS.

Mr. PERKS said: A matter that was exciting a great deal of interest particularly among the Presbyterians in Scotland and the Wesleyans in England was the alteration that had been made in the regulations for provision for religious accommodation of soldiers in the British army in India. Under the regulations of the Indian Government it was absolutely required that provision should be made for the holding of religious services for the soldiers of her Majesty's army, and hitherto the soldiers had been classified as Church of England, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, and Wesleyan. Up to a recent date the churches provided by the Government in India had been used not only for the services of the Church of England, but for those of Presbyterian and Wesleyan Churches, the Roman Catholics having separate provision. Those churches were in no sense established churches. In 1898 the Government of India issued certain regulations prescribing the way in which those buildings should be used for worship, but those regulations were amended in 1899, and amended in a way offensive to Presbyterians and Wesleyans. The control of the buildings, which had been almost wholly provided out of public funds, and the arrangement and order of the services were placed entirely in the hands of the senior chaplain of the forces in India, who was the metropolitan of the Church of England at Calcutta. There was therefore substituted for the military and civil authority the ecclesiastical authority of the head of the Church of England in India. He trusted the noble lord would give this matter his serious consideration in order that some change in the existing state of affairs should be effected.

COLONEL SANDYS.

Colonel SANDYS called attention to the paucity of British officers in native Indian regiments, and suggested that every Native battalion should be divided into four strong companies each with a British captain and two subalterns, in addition to the Native officers. The staff of the battalion, he thought, should be left as at present. Another point to which he drew attention was the recruiting for the Gurkha regiments. There were no Native soldiers who had covered themselves with more glory or were more trusted by their officers than the Gurkhas, but they were limited in numbers, their country was a small one, and for that and other reasons it became more difficult every year to secure the requisite number of recruits. But there were other hill districts in India inhabited by extremely brave, loyal military races, of whose capacity he could speak from personal experience. Those men felt being left out in the cold when recruits for the Army were needed, and he suggested that the Gurkha regiments might very well be augmented by enlistments from a district inhabited by men of the same race.

Mr. Kimber.

Mr. Kimber asked the Secretary of State for India, with reference to the proposed currency legislation, if it was meant by the expression that the rupee was to be taken at the value of 1s. 4d. that contracts made in India expressed in sterling terms might be liquidated by the legal tender of 15 rupees per pound sterling. He understood that while the Government was willing to give 15 rupees for one pound sterling, it was not to be bound to sell at that rate. In other words, 15 rupees were not to be legal tender for a sovereign. If that was correct, a promissory note payable in India might be liquidated by the tender of 15 rupees per pound sterling, but the payee, if he wished it, could not have sovereigns for his silver. That appeared to involve an anomaly. With reference to the question of the chiefship of Kythal, on which he had a motion on the paper, he asked the noble lord to inform the House in what position the case now stood.

Mr. Herbert Roberts.

Mr. Herbert Roberts rose to call attention to the proposals of the Viceroy of India with reference to the future municipal administration of Calcutta. He pointed out that many of the most important provisions of the Bill had been vetoed by the Government of India, and that the scheme proposed to the Legislative Council by Lord Curzon was in many respects worse than the Bill previously introduced. Under the present system the influence exercised by the representative element as against the nominated element on the municipal body of Calcutta was as two to one, and the same ratio was preserved in regard to the Corporation, and one-third only of the representation upon the executive committee of the corporation. The result of the Viceroy's proposal, if it were carried out, would be to give the rate-paying population of Calcutta less than one-half of the representation upon the executive committee. The native population in that case would be helpless either to regulate or resist taxation, and that measure of self-government, which, on the whole, had worked so well in Calcutta during the last 23 years would be withdrawn. Various reasons were advanced by the Government of India in favour of the proposed change. It was said that the corporation was at present too large; if that were so the numbers might be reduced. It was said that not sufficient interest was taken in municipal matters by the Native population, and that only some $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of the ratepayers ordinarily voted in municipal elections; but that depended on the franchise and the number of contested elections. It was not true to say, moreover, that the European interest and wealth largely preponderated in Calcutta, besides which municipal government had to do primarily not with the commerce of any city, but with the conditions of life under which the ratepayers lived. It had been said that the present proposals had been made on the Bombay model, but if Calcutta had a municipal constitution which had worked satisfactorily on the whole it should not be withdrawn for the sake of bringing it into line with that of Bombay. He would suggest that the settlement of this matter should be postponed for some months, and that a committee, composed of two natives, two Europeans, and a chairman selected by the Government, should be appointed to enquire into the means of remedying the defects of the present municipal constitution of Calcutta without withdrawing from the city its right of self-government. (Cheers.)

Mr. Wylie.

On the return of the Speaker after the usual interval,

Mr. Wylie continued the debate. He expressed surprise that the right hon. gentleman the member for Wolverhampton (East), whose conduct of affairs in India had resulted in great benefit to that country as well as credit to himself, should have headed the attack against countervailing duties on sugar, because they were a continuation of his own policy. In 1893 the Government of which the right hon. gentleman was a member closed the mints to silver, a statesmanlike action, but still, in the opinion of many so-called Free Traders, a far more drastic infringement of the principles of Free Trade than the countervailing duties in question. It was fortunate for the sugar industry of India that the right hon. gentleman's successor took a much sounder view, and the result of his policy was that that industry was now being conducted practically on Free Trade lines. The noble lord was also to be congratulated upon his appointment of the Committee on Indian currency, whose report would serve, he believed, as the source of information on many important subjects connected with the trade and commerce of India for some years to come. Some bimetallists were disappointed at the finding of the Committee, but he was glad to know that a large section of them agreed with the monometallists. He was very glad to see that the Secretary of State in his instructions to the Viceroy called special attention to the proposal in regard to the consolidation and establishment of banking facilities in India. The object to be aimed at was the introduction into India of a sufficient gold reserve. There were at present three principal banks in India, but they were obsolete institutions, and it was high time that a State bank should be established resting on a broader and more stable foundation. The advantages of such a bank would be very great. It would provide the considerable amount of gold necessary for an effective gold standard much more cheaply than the Government could provide it, it would save the cost of Government loans, and it would regulate the rate of discount and make it as stable in India as it was in London. He contended that the establishment of a gold standard would do great things for India and would give that confidence to the British public which was required to induce them to place their capital in India.

Mr. Keswick.

Mr. Keswick expressed the hope that the House would soon see a fulfilment of the pledge that when the improvement in the rate of exchange admitted of it the duties upon imports would be removed.

Sir H. Fowler.

Sir H. Fowler said he did not propose to occupy the attention of the House for more than a few minutes, but he thought it was due to the noble lord, not only on account of his Budget statement but also on account of his reference to the proposed change in the currency, that one word or two should be said on the Opposition side of the House by way of admiration of the manner in which he had discharged his duty in making his financial statement. (Hear, hear.) He congratulated the Government of India on the fact that such a statement could be made at all. (Hear, hear.) The prosperity which had attended India, both financially, commercially, and agriculturally, during the last year was a matter which he thought everybody who took the slightest interest in India was exceedingly thankful for; and he noted with considerable interest the fact that, whilst last year was a record year of deficit, this year had been a record year of surplus. The hon. member who had just sat down had alluded to the question of relieving India from taxation. The noble lord omitted to call attention to one paragraph in his Memorandum which bore upon the question of taxation: it was, "If the taxation proper be divided over the population of British India, without making any deduction on account of the portion derived from salt, excise, Customs, etc., which must fall on the inhabitants of the Native States, the burden of taxation per head in the Budget for 1899-1900 is R. 1 4a. 5p., which at the exchange value of 16d. per rupee is equal to not quite 1s. $8\frac{1}{2}$d. If to this be added the amount of the land revenue the average is raised to Rs. 2 6a. 7p., or about 3s. $2\frac{1}{2}$d." That, he thought, was a very low rate of taxation in any country deriving the advantage India did from its Government. (Hear, hear.) As to the remarks of the hon. member for Epsom, he must say that he was not aware that any pledge was ever given by the Government who imposed the import duties or the Government who had modified them since that they would be the first objects of consideration when the time arrived to deal with taxation in India. He had again and again stated that the salt duty had the first claim on the consideration of the State; but that was simply a private opinion of his own. He thanked the noble lord and the House for the manner in which they had received the references to the Report of the Currency Committee. He could not forget that when that Committee was appointed many persons in and out of the House were of opinion that the Committee was not the most competent that might have been selected, and in that, perhaps, they were quite right. It was, however, also argued by some people that the Committee had made up their minds on the question, and that they were simply going to meet for the purpose of recording a pre-formed opinion. He thought that anyone who read the evidence would see that that was not the case. He assured the House that it would be impossible to find a body of gentlemen who were more anxious to arrive at the truth and to do justice to the great interests which fell within the purview of their consideration. They had a perfectly open mind on the difficult questions submitted to them, and their sole desire was to find out what was the best and most practical mode of dealing with the difficulty. The Committee studiously avoided any grappling with the details. They felt that their business was to lay down a certain principle, and that the details ought to be left in the hands of the responsible Government of India. There had been considerable reference in the course of the evening to the formation of the new bank in India. Had he not been Chairman of the Committee he should have signed the Memorandum of Mr. Hambro which dealt with that question. With reference to the question of borrowing, three very competent and able members of the Committee signed a separate Memorandum objecting to borrowing for the purpose of carrying out currency reform. The rest of the Committee did not concur in that view. It had not been desired by the Committee to tie the hands of the Executive in dealing with the question. There was one question on which the noble lord did not say anything, probably because he intended to lay papers on the Table—namely, the announcement in the Press that the Viceroy, with the consent of the home authorities, had decided on a modification of frontier policy. As he understood the matter, the Viceroy's proposition if carried would restore to the regular army a large number of troops hitherto quartered at fortified posts in the tribal country, and would, it was hoped, result in an annual saving of many lakhs of rupees to the Exchequer. With regard to the changes made in the regulations for the user of public buildings belonging to the Government, the principal of the University of Glasgow, Dr. Story, addressed a letter to the *Times* three or four days ago, which no doubt many members had read. It put the case so clearly and concisely that he would call the special attention of the Secretary for India to it. He himself hoped something would be said by the noble lord which would reassure the Church of Scotland and the Nonconformists of this country that churches which had been built for the accommodation of British soldiers generally would not be devoted solely to one Protestant denomination. He protested against the metropolitan of any Church controlling the Secretary of State in this matter. No one respected the Bishop of Calcutta more than he did, but this was a question of a constitutional character, and they could not in any way weaken or detract from the cardinal principle on which the Government of India was based—namely, the absolute supremacy of the Queen in all matters, not only civil, but ecclesiastical. In conclusion, he congratulated the noble lord on the figures he had had to present and the manner in which he had presented them, and expressed a hope that there would be no return of famine, and that within a few days they might receive the welcome intelligence that the monsoon was discharging its beneficent work in the western part of India. (Cheers.)

LORD G. HAMILTON'S "REPLY."

UNCIVIL ATTACK ON SIR W. WEDDERBURN AND "INDIA."

Lord G. Hamilton, replying on the discussion, thanked the right hon. gentleman for the kindness of his references to himself. In all matters relating to the Government of India the right hon. gentleman had always taken care that the partisan element should not, as far as

he was concerned, enter into the subject. (Hear, hear.) With regard to the import duties on cotton, while he would be glad to reduce any unpopular taxation, he was not pledged in any way to interfere with those duties. The frontier policy which had been decided upon by Lord Curzon was entirely in accord with the principles of a despatch which he himself sent to India two years ago in the name of her Majesty's Government, in which they laid down the line which the Indian Government would pursue for the future in connexion with frontier difficulties. He had summed up that despatch in two words by saying that the principles it represented were concentration and conciliation. He was glad to say that Lord Curzon had thrown himself with his characteristic energy into the realisation of this policy, and he believed it would meet with the unanimous approval of both sides of the House. (Hear, hear.) As to the question of the user of churches built by the Indian Government, he agreed that they should not allow their theological polemics at home to influence them in their action in religious matters in India. There was an idea that in India a number of churches which were built as common to all denominations were confined to the use of one. This was a mistake. It was impossible to build one church for all denominations. As a matter of fact churches were built for Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Wesleyans, under which latter term were classed all Nonconformists. In order to obtain private subscriptions to a church in addition to the Government grant, it was necessary that the church should be devoted to some particular denomination. Some years ago he received a deputation of Presbyterian and Wesleyan ministers who complained that there were undue restrictions in the use of certain Episcopalian churches. He replied that where the Episcopalians were in a great majority they must be consulted first, but that there might be cases in which a more conciliatory spirit would be practicable. He forwarded the representations to the Government of India, and Lord Elgin issued a fresh set of regulations. Up to that time the consent of the chaplain had been unnecessary for the use of any church associated with the Church of England; but the new regulations provided that ministers of other denominations who were dissatisfied with the decision of the chaplain could appeal to the local authority, who would consult with the bishop, and in case of disagreement the final decision was given to the local authority or the Commander-in-Chief. Lord Elgin had authority to issue those regulations without consulting the Secretary of State, and he did so; but when they reached this country the Archbishop of Canterbury and other dignitaries of the Church protested against them. The objections were sent out to the Viceroy, but in the interval two decisions had been given, and in both cases the local authority had decided against the Nonconformist claims, though the metropolitan did not approve of those decisions. Therefore the new regulations had not worked well, but their effect had been the contrary of that which had been intended. There was also this difficulty — that the churches associated with the Church of England had from time to time been consecrated, and it was contended that consecration gave power to the consecrating authority to determine the use of the church. If that were so it was evident that the best way of obtaining for Presbyterians and Nonconformists a more extended use of the churches was by application to the responsible authority, and the metropolitan was a man of very liberal spirit. As to the Presbyterian chaplains, there were not many of them, and they were concentrated in two or three regiments, and were consequently moving about constantly. But where there were a considerable number of Presbyterians permanently stationed in one place it would be desirable that a church should be built for them. The House would understand that whatever difficulty had arisen in connexion with these rules had not preceeded from any spirit of antagonism. There were certain legal rights which the Church of England possessed as well as the Presbyterian and the Roman Catholic Churches, and as the Episcopalians constituted by far the largest body in the community, it was only fair that they should be at least on terms of equality with members of other religions. (Hear, hear.) The Presbyterians could not expect to have churches of their own, over which they had absolute control, and demand also the use of Episcopalian churches. He assured the House he would do his best to arrive at a satisfactory settlement, but it was impossible to come to a decision until he had a clear definition of legal rights and authority in regard to the use of churches. With various other questions he rapidly dealt. With regard to the late Calcutta Municipality it was generally admitted that they talked too much and did not do their work well, and it should be borne in mind that the sanitary condition of Calcutta was not a local but an Imperial question. It became impossible for the Government to shut their eyes to the inefficient administration that prevailed, and when it became necessary to introduce a reform the representative principle was as far as possible maintained. Among the variety of suggestions a scheme similar to that which had worked well in Bombay found favour, and this Lord Curzon adopted. It had worked well in Bombay, and he saw no reason why it should not succeed in Calcutta. He could hold out no hope of its being modified. As to the number of European officers attached to Native regiments, this was a question that had been carefully considered. In time of peace it was inadvisable to increase the number, for there would then be not enough for the native officers to do, and these proved themselves most efficient in warfare. Some progress had been made with a plan for organising a reserve whereby the number of European officers could be increased in time of need. The remarks of his hon. and gallant friend (Colonel Sandys) in reference to recruiting of Native regiments should be brought to the notice of the Government of India. As to the question of the hon. member for Wandsworth in reference to the currency proposals, he had to say that terms of sterling contracts would be enforced as now. The currency proposals would enable a debtor to tender gold instead of rupees, and he had explained this in his speech. To the hon. member for Wolverhampton he had sent figures showing the difference in prices in English and American tenders for contracts. He sent his hon. friend these figures because he wanted the ironmasters, as well as the men they employed, to seriously consider the new forms of competition with which they had to deal. There could not be the slightest doubt that the Americans were introducing new methods of production, and every engineer connected with Indian railroads who had been over to America had been surprised at the development that had taken place there. He desired as far as possible, and wherever he could, to give contracts to British firms, but he did think it was advisable that both masters and men should fully realise what progress America was making. (Hear, hear.) The hon. member for Bethnal-Green had urged the separation of the judicial from the executive functions in certain branches of Indian administration. He did not deny that theoretically there was a great deal of force in the hon. gentleman's contention; but, on the other hand, he was assured by very competent civilians that the present system did not work badly and that the proposals he had put forward would entail a very heavy expenditure. He must wait until he got somewhat fuller information from the Indian Government before he gave an expression of opinion on the subject. In the course of the debate opinions had been expressed in various quarters that the House was indifferent as to Indian questions and took little interest in Indian subjects. He had been very many years in the House, and he did not think he had ever known a House of Commons where the interest taken in Indian questions was more intense than it was in the present House of Commons. He could not help being struck by the pathetic admission of the hon. baronet the member for Banff. The hon. baronet said that for six years he had been working away under the impression that he represented the whole of the Natives of India—(laughter)—and that he had never succeeded in getting one single, solitary grievance he had brought forward remedied. The Press, he went on to say, public opinion, Parliament, and the India Office were all against him. How was it the hon. baronet had not been able to get any redress for any grievance he had brought forward? How was it that public opinion, the House of Commons, the Press, and the India Office were all combined against him? Had it ever occurred to the hon. baronet that his want of success was a little due to the tactics he adopted? (Hear, hear.) The hon. baronet had complained that he was not a *persona grata* at the India Office. Was that any wonder in view of the tactics the hon. baronet adopted, and in view of his connexion with the paper called INDIA? Did the hon. baronet think that anybody responsible for that paper was likely to have his remarks received with much favour, either by the Indian Government or by the Secretary of State? (Hear, hear.) The hon. baronet and those with whom he acted did everything in their power to stir up bad feeling towards the Indian Government. This paper circulated the grossest falsehoods, which went out to India and came back repeated a hundredfold in the Native Press. When in addressing his constituents he (Lord G. Hamilton) spoke of the number of young men whom England produced to take part in the work of civilising savages, INDIA accused him of having called India a savage country.

Sir W. WEDDERBURN: I am not responsible for articles in the paper.

Lord G. HAMILTON said the hon. baronet was the head of the Committee that got the money to support the paper, and so long as he associated with persons making such allegations against the Indian authorities, he declined to associate with the hon. baronet. If the hon. baronet wanted to make his efforts of any effect he should try to say to people to their face what, through the Press and otherwise, he said behind their back; and until he did that he could not expect that anything he said in that House would have any effect. (Cheers.)

The House then went into Committee, Mr. Arthur O'Connor in the chair, when the financial Resolution was agreed to as follows:—

Resolved, That it appears, by the Accounts laid before this House, that the total revenue of India for the year ending on March 31, 1898, was Rx. 96,442,004; that the total expenditure in India and in England charged against Revenue was Rx. 101,801,215; that there was an excess of expenditure over Revenue of Rx. 5,359,211; and that the capital outlay on railways and irrigation works not charged against Revenue was Rx. 4,328,541.

The House stood adjourned at 25 minutes before 11 o'clock.

Wednesday, August 9.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE QUEEN'S SPEECH AND INDIA.

The LORD CHANCELLOR read her Majesty's gracious speech on the prorogation of Parliament. The speech made the following reference to India:

From my Indian Empire I have continued to receive satisfactory reports of the rapid recovery of agriculture and trade from the depression caused by the late famine, but during the last few weeks the rainfall has been insufficient over a portion of Western and Central India, and fears are entertained as to the prospects of the harvests in those regions. My officers are carefully watching the situation, and timely precautions to meet any scarcity, should it occur, will be adopted. I regret to add that the plague, though still confined to the areas affected last winter, shows no signs of abatement.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

Sir CHARLES DILKE,—Indian Budget,—That it is desirable either that the East India Revenue Accounts should be debated on an earlier day in each Session, or that a token vote in respect of the salary of the Secretary of State for India should be placed on the Estimates, and an additional day in Supply given for its discussion.

Sir MARK STEWART,—Opium,—That, in view of the grave objections to which the manufacture and sale of opium for smoking purposes by the Indian Government are open, and in view of the declared policy of this country to help China in the paths of reform, it is incumbent on the British Government to take whatever steps may be necessary for bringing such manufacture and sale to an early close. [*Next Session.*]

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